

SENATE BILL 783
By Burks

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303,
relative to school counselors.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is amended in subsection
(a) by deleting the first three (3) lines thereof and substituting the following:

Each local education agency operating elementary and secondary schools shall
employ school counselors for grades Kindergarten (K) through twelve (12) subject to the
following conditions:

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended by
deleting subdivisions (a)(1) and (2) and substituting the following:

(a)(1) There shall be one (1) school counselor per five hundred (500) students in
ADM in grades kindergarten (k) through six (6), and one (1) school counselor per three
hundred and fifty (350) students in ADM in grades seven (7) through twelve (12)
including vocational education;

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended in
subdivision (a)(3) by deleting the words and figures "one (1) and two (2)".

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended in
subdivision (a)(4) by deleting the words "elementary school guidance counselor program" and
substituting the words "school guidance and counseling program".

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SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended by deleting subsection (b) in its entirety and substituting the following:

(b) Nothing in subsection (a) shall prohibit any local education agency from employing more licensed school counselors than provided for in subsection (a).

SECTION 6. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended in subsection (c) by deleting present subsection and substituting the following:

(c) School guidance and counseling positions established under the provisions of subsection (a) shall be funded in accordance with the provisions of the Tennessee basic education program (BEP) funding formula.

SECTION 7. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended by deleting subsection (d) in its entirety and substituting the following:

(d) Licensed school counselors shall provide preventive and developmental guidance and counseling to all school children designed to enhance students' academic, social, emotional, and physical maturity. In providing guidance and counseling services, the counselors shall:

(1) Aid children in academic development through the use and interpretation of test scores, improved pupil self-concept, and early identification and attention to problems that are deterrents to learning and development;

(2) Act in a consultative role to teachers relative to the use of test scores and improvement of the learning environment, use of out-of-school resources and agencies; and development of a home-school liaison;

(3) Offer services related to the identification and placement of children with handicapping conditions;

(4) Serve in a consultative role to parents, in a liaison capacity, as a resource in understanding growth and development problems, and as an aid in

understanding how some nonschool factors affect learning and achievement of children;

(5) Serve as a resource in decreasing discipline problems through an understanding of peer relations, teacher-pupil relations, social awareness and drug awareness;

(6) Aid in improving school attendance and retention by implementing an early identification and prevention program for potential attendance and retention problems;

(7) Serve as a resource in decreasing the incidence of juvenile delinquency by early intervention through guidance and counseling services;

(8) Act as a resource and consultant to teachers in implementing a career development program which includes self-awareness and pre-vocational orientation; and

(9) Provides available source for youngsters needing someone to “just listen” to their problems and concerns.

SECTION 8. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended by deleting subsection (e) in its entirety and by substituting the following:

(e) The minimum requirements to be employed as a school counselor shall be a licensed certificate of endorsement as a school counselor issued by the state department of education.

SECTION 9. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended in subsection (f) by deleting the words “elementary school guidance counselors” and substituting the words “licensed school counselors”.

SECTION 10. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-303, is further amended by designating present subsection (f) to be subdivision (f)(1) and by adding a new subdivision (f)(2), as follows:

(f)(2) After the BEP is fully funded, a local education agency must use funds provided for a school counseling program in such program as provided for in this section or must advise the department of education that the local education agency has affirmatively determined not to do so, in which case the local education agency shall notify the department of its election against providing such service and the alternative arrangement which the local education agency has made to meet the counseling needs of its students.

SECTION 11. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

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